

FALL 2015 Alumni Columns

Northwestern State University Magazine





*Dr. Jim Henderson
1994
President
Northwestern State
University*

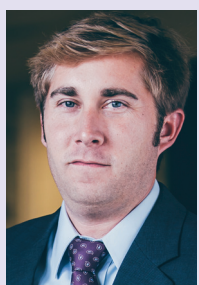
Dear Alumni:

Earlier this year, Natchitoches received a special designation that surprised no one when it was named the Best Southern Small Town by the readers of USA Today. This honor was reaffirmed when the city once again rolled out the red carpet in welcoming our students back for the fall semester. There are not many college towns that go so far to build relationships with the student population, and we are grateful for the support we receive from our hometown leaders, businesses, and citizens.

Deepening our connection with all of the communities we serve is a key component of our strategic framework. The Natchitoches, Shreveport/Bossier, Leesville/Fort Polk, and Alexandria communities provide wonderful settings for our campuses. NSU, in turn, adds significant economic impact, provides access to quality higher education, and enriches the culture with world class arts programming. These town/gown relationships are mutually beneficial, and we will seize every opportunity to build on them. A perfect example is the announcement that the stunning NSU Christmas Gala will be performed in Shreveport's historic Strand Theatre on December 12. We could not be more excited.

We are also excited for what is shaping up to be an academic year for the ages. Our faculty have worked to strengthen our traditional academic offerings and are developing exciting new programs. Coupled with a renewed focus on providing the best possible student experience, these efforts will move us quickly toward our vision to become the nation's premier regional university. A willingness to be innovative and rethink the way we work is vital to realizing the full potential of our alma mater. To that end, we welcome and encourage your involvement and support.

By the time you read this, we will be finalizing preparations for a fantastic Homecoming celebration. If you have not visited the NSU campus lately, I hope you plan to do so soon. It's a new day at Northwestern State University.



*Drake Owens, 2004,
2005
Assistant Vice
President of External
Affairs for University
Advancement*

My fellow alumni,

In the last few weeks, I have felt like one of the luckiest people around to be able to return to Northwestern State and resume a job I absolutely loved. I wish I could describe to you the energy of our students, the enthusiasm of faculty and staff and the renewed sense of purpose buzzing from all corners of Northwestern State, from Shreveport to Leesville and, of course, in Natchitoches. I am so honored to be part of this new era at NSU.

In addition to Homecoming preparations (a schedule of 2015 events is printed on Page 4), we are very excited about a new tradition that we hope will showcase the talent and spirit of the university to a large audience. Northwestern will be staging the wildly popular NSU Christmas Gala at Shreveport's historic Strand Theatre, an event that promise to be a spectacle like no other. Information on that event can be found on Page 3.

One of my goals in returning to the NSU is to find new ways to engage alumni of all ages, from our 20-somethings to our golden jubilee graduates. We believe the NSU family can serve a greater purpose for the university through networking, mentorship opportunities and helping us identify promising prospective students. You as alumni are ambassadors for Northwestern State when you describe your student experience, the friends and the memories you made during your time here.

Again, I express my gratitude at being able to return to the NSU family. We hope to see you at Homecoming and, of course, at the Gala @ the Strand. Thank you for all you do to support Northwestern State University.

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Alumni Office Phone: 318-357-4414 and 888-799-6486
FAX: 318-357-4225 • E-mail: owensd@nsula.edu

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City of Natchitoches

Top 50 Most Beautiful Small Towns in America

- Good Housekeeping and House Beautiful magazines, June 2015

The City of Natchitoches, home to Northwestern State University - the finest higher learning institution in the state, was recently named “Best Southern Small Town” and one of the “50 Most Beautiful Small Towns in America.” We invite you to return to the home of your alma mater and see why Natchitoches is the same great place you remember, but with so many new opportunities!

Calendar of Events

Oct. 2 - 3: Return to the 50s Classic Car Show, Downtown Natchitoches

Oct. 9 - 11: Annual Pilgrimage: Fall Tour of Homes, Natchitoches Historic District

Oct. 16: Northwestern State University’s Rockin’ on the Riverbank Homecoming Festival

Oct. 31: Witch Way to Main Street, Downtown Natchitoches

Nov. 21: Turn on the Holidays - Festival of Lights Kick-Off, Downtown Natchitoches

Nov. 28: Fleur de Lis Arts & Craft Show, Natchitoches Events Center

Dec. 2 - 4: Northwestern State University/Natchitoches Christmas Gala

Dec. 5: 89th Annual Natchitoches Christmas Festival, Downtown Natchitoches

Dec. 9, 11, 12, 16, 18 & 19: Holiday Home Tour, Natchitoches Historic District

Fireworks every Saturday, November 21st - December 26th on the Downtown Riverbank!



Best Southern Small Town

- USA Today & 10Best.com, May 2015



www.natchitochesla.gov



Gala @ the Strand takes holiday spectacular to historic Shreveport venue

Northwestern State University's School of Performing Arts will stage its most popular holiday production in a new venue this December. The annual Christmas Gala, a perennial holiday favorite in Natchitoches, will be presented on the stage of Shreveport's historic Strand Theatre with two show times on Saturday, Dec. 12.

"This will be the entire show taken on the road," said Dr. Greg Handel, director of the Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts. "Gala is a collaborative effort from all areas of CAPA, music, art, theatre and dance. Over 300 students, faculty and staff participate in the production of the show, from costumes, to decorating, to program design, to performing and directing."

Show times will be a 4 p.m. matinee and a 7:30 p.m. evening performance. Tickets are \$5 for students ages 17 and under, free for NSU students with IDs and \$10 for adults. The production will support Shreveport's Joy Fund.

For many, the Christmas Gala has been a tradition to kick-off Festival weekend and the CAPA faculty and students are excited about presenting the show at The Strand.

"When I came to NSU in 1983, there was already a Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony Orchestra concert held early in the evening the night before the Christmas Festival and afterwards our elected officials would host their Festival parties," recalled Bill Brent, CAPA's long-time director. When Brent became department head in 1986, he realized there weren't many people attending the concert and wanted to do something to change it up. Shortly thereafter, when Dr. Jack Wann was hired as coordinator of theatre and dance, he and Brent discussed ways to attract more people to the Christmas concert. Their idea was inspired by the Radio City Music Hall Christmas Spectacular.

"We wanted to showcase not just music, but everything else we had to offer," Brent said. "We were also doing children's concerts at the time and we wanted to strike a balance between fun things for kids as well as a performance adults would enjoy. As our theatre and music programs grew, we added dance and included different types of acts and more and more people wanted to get involved. We wanted to offer something that

people would find entertaining that would include singing, dancing, theatre and artwork."

As the Gala's popularity grew, many elements have become expected favorites.

"The crowds always want to see tin soldiers and they love the percussion line."

Logistically, Gala could not come at a worse time, falling the week after Thanksgiving and the week before finals but the audience appreciation and exposure for the university

make it worth everyone's extra effort. Planning and preparation begin in the spring and continue, along with rehearsals, throughout the fall semester. Intense rehearsals begin three weeks prior to show's opening, annually held the Wednesday before the Natchitoches Christmas Festival in A.A. Fredericks Fine Arts Auditorium.

Over the years, the

Gala grew from one evening performance to five daytime shows and four evening shows and organizers are enthusiastic about adding two more performances for the Shreveport audience.

"More than 12,000 see the gala in Natchitoches each year, and it is met with enthusiasm from all audiences. The school-age students particularly love the show, and we are hoping to bring together all of the audience favorites for this year's production," Handel said.

"One wonderful thing about Gala is it creates an atmosphere for the students as to what will be expected of them, whether they are a pit orchestra musician, a costumer, a dancer or a sound technician. This is what happens in a Broadway show atmosphere when you have multiple performances in a short amount of time. It's a great laboratory experience for the students," Brent said. "Another thing is it showcases all of Creative and Performing Arts, so if you don't like dancing, just wait a minute and the jazz orchestra is going to play. There's something in there for everyone. It's a top notch production that leaves a positive impression in people's minds."

For information and tickets to the Gala @ the Strand, visit nsula.edu/gala.



Helping support the **Joy Fund**, powered by  **The Times** shreveporttimes.com



Owens returns to direct NSU Alumni

Drake Owens was named interim assistant vice president of external affairs for university advancement at Northwestern State University. The appointment is subject to approval by the Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System.

Owens will oversee the Office of University Advancement including the areas of Institutional Development and Alumni Affairs and will serve as Executive Director of the NSU Foundation and NSU Alumni Association.

"It is a privilege for me to return to Northwestern State and be part of this exciting new era," Owens said. "I look forward to new programming that will engage alumni and supporters of all ages and hope to develop relationships that will benefit students through scholarships and networking opportunities."

Owens worked as a staff member at Northwestern State from 2005 to 2012. He was selected as assistant director of alumni affairs and development in 2006 and was named Director of

University Advancement and Executive Director of the NSU Foundation in 2008.

Under his leadership the NSU Foundation organized and completed its second capital fundraising campaign exceeding the goal of \$25 million and raising \$36 million in scholarship and institutional enhancement funds. During his tenure Owens was instrumental in developing an online networking platform for alumni and supporters, planning the institution's 125th anniversary celebration, creating the division of university marketing and branding, establishing a number of support organizations including the NSU Demon Regiment and Student Alumni Association, and planning the construction of the Alumni Plaza Courtyard and Collins Pavilion.

Owens is 2004 and 2005 graduate of Northwestern State University earning a Bachelor of Science in Biology and Master of Science in Sports Administration. He earned the degree of Juris Doctor from Loyola University New

Orleans College of Law in 2015 and is currently working toward completion of a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership at the University of New Orleans. He also earned a certification in Environmental Law from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law and was certified as a Professional Minerals and Royalty Asset Manager through the NARO Institute.

Owens is a member of professional organizations including the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, Association of Louisiana Alumni Executives, American Bar Association, and National Association of Royalty Owners. He has served as a member of the Natchitoches Area Jaycees and Natchitoches Rotary Club.

Owens is a native of Homer where he grew up with his wife Courtney who works as a pharmacist for Natchitoches Regional Medical Center. The couple has been married for 7 years and recently welcomed their first son Miller.

Homecoming 2015: May the odds be in your favor

Northwestern State University's 2016 Homecoming Celebration, themed Homecoming Games, will take place Friday, Oct. 16-Saturday, Oct. 17 featuring the annual golf tournament, Homecoming parade and pep rally, Rockin' on the Riverbank, reunions, inductions, tailgating, football and the presentation of this year's Honor Court.

Times and locations for some events may be subject to change. Please check with organizers when making plans to attend activities.

Friday, Oct. 16

- 10:00 am – Alumni Association Board Meeting @ Caspari Hall Conference Room, 3rd Floor
- 11:00 am – Homecoming Golf Tournament @ NSU Rec Complex
- 1:30 pm – NSU Foundation Board Meeting @ Caspari Hall Conference Room, 3rd Floor
- 5:30 pm – Homecoming Parade
- 6:00 pm – Pep Rally
- 6:30 pm – Rockin' on the Riverbank Homecoming Festival, featuring live entertainment by LA Rxxx
- 7:30 pm – Homecoming Awards During Rockin' on the Riverbank

Saturday, Oct. 17

- 8:00 am – Homecoming Alumni Breakfast @ Collins Pavilion
- 9:30 am – Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development Reunion @ Teacher Education Commons Area
- 1995/2005 College of Education Class Reunion
- 9:45 am – Pi Kappa Phi Alumni Chapter Meeting @ Pi Kappa Phi Chapter House, 730 University Parkway

- 10:00 am – Hall of Distinguished Educators Induction Ceremony @ Teacher Education Auditorium, Pod A
- N Club Hall of Fame Induction @ Magale Recital Hall
- 10:30 am – Sigma Sigma Sigma Sorority Open House @ Tri Sigma house on Organization Row
- 11:00 am – College of Business Reception for Outstanding Business Awards @ Russell Hall, Natchitoches Room
- 12:00 pm – Pi Kappa Phi Family Luncheon @ Lasyone's Meat Pie Restaurant, 622 2nd Street
- 12:30 pm – Demon Regiment Open House @ James A. Noe Military Science Building
- 2:00 pm – Tailgating Activities @ Collins Pavilion and Donald's Demon Alley
- 4:30 pm – Phi Mu Fraternity Open House @ Phi Mu house on Organization Row
- 5:30 pm – Pregame Activities @ Turpin Stadium
- 6:00 pm – Northwestern State vs. Lamar @ Turpin Stadium
- 7:30 pm – Halftime Ceremonies @ Turpin Stadium





Northwestern roots run deep for Kerlin Sutton

Kerlin Sutton's roots are deeply entrenched in the soil and soul of Natchitoches, his birthplace and home for nine decades and a town that reaps enormous benefits from Kerlin's influence and the vision of his forefathers.

His great grandfather Capt. Leopold Caspari was a powerful member of the Louisiana Legislature and a business leader who spearheaded the campaign for the establishment of the Normal School—now Northwestern State University—in Natchitoches.

That family legacy was a major factor in Kerlin's intense and lifelong interest in the history of his hometown and his decision to stay in Natchitoches and create businesses and connections that would contribute to the growth and stability of the community.

Born in his parents' home on Jefferson Street in 1925, Kerlin was an only child. He said being born at home didn't create any concerns for his parents since the Natchitoches Hospital was just across the street at the time.

Kerlin's dad was a ticket agent for the Texas & Pacific Railroad who was moved here by the company from Terrell, Texas. His mother was a homemaker who spent much of her time caring for Kerlin after he was stricken with a usually-fatal childhood disease that resulted in high fevers and related problems.

Those health issues limited Kerlin's physical activities, but he was a good student in school, where he went all the way from first grade through graduation at elementary, junior high and high schools on the Northwestern campus.

He loved his high school principal A.B. Simpson but said he "was scared to death of him. He was second in

command to God." Kerlin was influenced by others at the school like the Allen sisters that taught English and librarian Lucile Carnahan.

After high school, Kerlin enrolled at Normal. He studied journalism and wanted to be in the newspaper business like his teacher Charles Cunningham, whose family owned the Natchitoches Times. He played the trumpet in the college band as he had in high school.

Big band music was popular, and Kerlin joined Carroll Crew, Charles Ragio, John Parks, Bill McLaughlin and some other guys in a dance band they called the Swing Kings. They played a couple of nights a week at the field-house for a dollar an hour.

America had become involved in World War II that year, and Kerlin signed up for the Air Force even though his 18th birthday was still a few months away. He dreamed of flying planes but was assigned to radar school because of vision problems.

That gave him an opportunity to study at the University of Illinois and University of Wisconsin, and he eventually served at bases in the Philippines, Okinawa and Tokyo.

When he completed his military service, Kerlin returned to Northwestern but changed his major to Business. He had some entrepreneurial interests and wanted to be prepared to pursue them.

Soon after getting back to Northwestern, Kerlin met Margaret Abington, a social studies major from Many whose dad later owned the popular Doug's Steakhouse in Natchitoches.

Margaret and Kerlin graduated together in 1949, married and had two children. Their son Mark has been with



Kerlin for years in local businesses, and their daughter Ellen Donaldson is a teacher in Baton Rouge.

Kerlin established real estate, insurance and home construction businesses as a general contractor in the 1950s when Natchitoches needed residential and commercial development to accommodate new businesses and enrollment growth at the university.

He was at the forefront for years of civic, professional and other activities to promote his hometown. Kerlin, who has lived most of his life on the banks of Cane River, retired recently but is still considered a leading authority on the history of the community.

Kerlin has an extensive collection of stories and materials on this 300-year-old city. Some came directly from Sam Caspari, his mother's father and the son of Leopold Caspari. Sam worked on the railroad with Kerlin's dad and lived with them for a while.

At the height of his political power, Leopold Caspari passed bills to build a college in Natchitoches and a railway to connect the town with an existing railroad network 17 miles away in Cypress.

Kerlin takes great pride in the fact that a building named in honor of his great grandfather in 1938 was renovated recently and is now a beautiful and stately site for administrative offices and a fitting monument to Caspari for his role in creating Northwestern.

But Kerlin Sutton should also be proud of his own business, civic and historical preservation endeavors over the years that have helped make his hometown such a unique and prominent place.

Spotlights

Billy Ellzey, who earned a master's degree in educational leadership at NSU in 2003, was named district superintendent of Forrest County Agricultural High School in Brooklyn, Mississippi. He was previously principal at Purvis (Mississippi) High School. Before Purvis, Ellzey spent five years as assistant principal at South Jones middle and high schools. He was at Purvis High for four years, bringing its accountability ranking up two spots for the last two years.

Ellzey said the years at South Jones and Purvis will serve him well at FCAHS.

"You gain valuable experience everywhere you go, so the main thing is learning to work with people," he said. "Having a vision and a mission together that moves us forward."

Ellzey is a native of Oak Grove and earned his undergraduate degree in chemistry at the University of Southern Mississippi in 1996. He and his wife, Angie, have one son, Ben, 16.

Alison Holmes (2008), a former standout Lady Demon track and field athlete, will begin her second season as the Sachse (Texas) Lady Mustangs coach this fall. Holmes is a 2004 honor graduate of DeRidder High School. She is ranked fourth on the Lady Demons Top 5 Performer List in the hammer throw with a distance of 167-1. She earned a degree in business administration.

Zachary Slayton was designated chairman of the Oasis Activities Conference, a competitive activities conference for international schools in the Middle East region. OAC is dedicated to designing, implementing and promoting athletics and activities through inter-school collaboration and leadership initiatives among its member schools and student participants. Slayton will be responsible for schools from eight countries to provide leadership and guidance.

Slayton serves as activities and athletic director for the Al-Bayan Bilingual School in Kuwait and was chairman of the Kuwait Schools Activities Association from 2011-2014. He earned a

degree in health and human performance in 1998.

Since he graduated from NSU, the Waskom, Texas, native has worked as a health and physical education teacher and head basketball and track coach in Karnack, Texas; Shreveport, Stanley, Yeosu, South Korea, and for the past seven years Kuwait. He was the head boys basketball coach of the 2004 MPSA South State Champion University Christian Prep War Eagles in Shreveport. He has served as the Activities and Athletics Director of the Al Bayan Bilingual School for the past 5 years. The KSAA serves Kuwait and the OAC serves the greater Middle East.

"While in Kuwait I have won what could be considered the equivalent of nine state championships in either varsity basketball and varsity track and field," he said. "I also went on to get my M.Ed. in Educational Supervision from Jones International University in 2007 and my Ed.S. in Teacher Leadership from Walden University in 2010."

Manny Augello continues to rack up accolades for his success as one of Louisiana's premiere chefs. Augello was recently selected for Pi Kappa Phi Fraternity's "Thirty Under 30" list, an honor that recognizes young alumni for their achievement after their undergraduate careers have come to an end.

Augello was born and raised in Palermo, Sicily, before coming to Louisiana. After graduating from NSU in 2008 he began working on his craft and soon took over as executive chef of Jolies Louisiana Bistro in Lafayette. After working there for over five years, he opened his own restaurant, Bread and Circus Provisions, where he is the owner and head chef and specializes in Cajun style cooking. Over the years Augello has been named one of five chefs in Louisiana to watch and one of the ten best chefs in Louisiana by the Louisiana Office of Tourism. He also had the honor of cooking at the famous James Beard House in New York City. He believes in culinary activism and supports the farm to table and slow food movements.

Augello was nominated to be

included in the 2015 "Thirty Under 30" class by peers, older alumni and friends of his fraternity. A committee of volunteers reviewed nominees in areas such as impact, leadership and service, and awards and recognition before narrowing the list to 30 finalists.

Alumni of 25 different chapters of all sizes, locations and age are represented in the group of 30, painting a broad, yet distinguished, view of Pi Kappa Phi as a national organization. The recipients come from all types of backgrounds, and were nominated for all types of outstanding achievement: volunteerism, professional achievement, etc. While the qualifications of the honor can vary, all of the recipients have in common a commitment to fraternal values.

Dan Medlin (1988) has accepted



Dan Medlin

the role of North American Talent Acquisition Manager at ARM (<http://arm.com/>). Founded and headquartered in Cambridge, England, ARM is

the world's leading semiconductor IP company, with technology inside 95 percent of the world's mobile devices. ARM employees bring cutting-edge technology to market around the globe, and Dan's team of recruiters will acquire engineers and other professional staff for major facilities in Austin and San Jose, along with various offices across North America, synchronizing efforts with the global team.

Dan was previously Talent Acquisition Leader for Samsung Austin Semiconductor, one of the world's most advanced manufacturing operations. He is also the author of the STAR Career Workbook (<http://tinyurl.com/STAR-Career-Workbook>), a guide to the challenging job of job-search. Dan and Lisa Medlin, and their 4 awesome children, live in the Austin, Texas, area. While at NSU from 1984-1988, Dan completed a degree in psychology, was an officer in the Kappa Sigma Fraternity, a founder of the NSU Rugby Club and served one

continued on page 7

Spotlights continued from page 6

year as Vic the Demon.



Natalie Stewart

Natalie Stewart (2011) joined the High Point (North Carolina) Enterprise as the crime and courts reporter. Stewart arrived at The Enterprise via the Killeen (Texas) Daily Herald, where she spent two years doing enterprise reporting on the city of 137,000. Stewart was part of a team that covered an April 2014 shooting spree at Fort Hood, in which five people were killed, including the shooter, and 16 wounded. The coverage of Stewart's team won third place in the breaking news category from the Texas Associated Press Managing Editors in 2014.

Stewart was the first on the scene to cover a SWAT standoff where an 18-year veteran police officer was killed.

Before that, Stewart spent two years at the American Press daily in Lake Charles as a beat reporter covering West Calcasieu Parish, one of the five parishes in the newspaper's coverage area, as well as health and public safety. The parish includes the cities of Westlake, Sulphur and Vinton. Stewart also worked for the Trinidad Chronicle-News in Trinidad, Colorado, reporting on city government, education and breaking news and writing features.

At NSU, Stewart majored in journalism and minored in English.

The McKinney, Texas, ISD named **Jimmy Bowser** (1998) principal of Faubion Middle School. Bowser, a veteran educator who has served as associate principal of McKinney High School for the past three years, assumed duties in August.

Bowser began his career in education 17 years ago as a classroom teacher, serving in Mesquite, Texas ISD and then Lewisville, Texas ISD before moving into administration and serv-



Jimmy Bowser

ing as an assistant principal in several local districts, including Frisco ISD from 2006 to 2012. During that time, he served as an interim principal for Frisco, Texas

Wakeland High School and as principal for the Frisco ISD Summer School program during summer 2012.

McKinney ISD hired Bowser later that summer to serve as associate principal of McKinney High School. In 2014, Bowser played an integral role in establishing a Marine Corps JROTC unit at MHS, a program unique among McKinney ISD high schools.

Bowser holds a bachelor's in education from Northwestern State University in Louisiana, a master's in educational administration from Texas A&M University-Commerce and is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of North Texas.



John Broussard (1968) provided this photo of an agricultural majors reunion held at Toledo Bend over the summer. Members present represent classes of 1965-1969.

Texas couple will pedal to raise funds for foster children



If teaching English to students in Taiwan wasn't enough of an adventure, two Northwestern State University alumni are embarking on a philanthropic trek around the island nation. Beginning in October, Cody and Liz Biggers plan to cycle 745-miles in a city-by-city trip, circling the island.

While this will certainly be a personal test of endurance, the ride has a deeper purpose. The Biggers' campaign supports families navigating foster care back in the United States.

Before moving to Taiwan, the couple lived in Austin, Texas, and were members of The Austin Stone Community Church. "We have seen God do amazing things through the people and programs in this church, and it was here that we first heard of The Foster Care Initiative," Liz said.

100 percent of the proceeds from the Biggers' fundraising efforts will support For The City Network's efforts in

Central Texas. "This money goes to equipping and supporting foster parents, mobilizing volunteer baby sitters, and ultimately serving the needs of children within the foster care system. "They are also requesting prayers as they embark on this journey.

Their trip is tentatively set for October 5-26 and will make stops in each city along the way. "We feel called by God to use this trip as a vehicle to glorify his name, and to help those in need," Cody said. "This will give our trip more of a purpose to us than just a vacation, and give us extra motivation to finish."

Cody Biggers earned a degree in biology at NSU and was a member of Pi Kappa Phi Fraternity. Liz, whose maiden name is Bigger, earned her degree in theatre. She was a member of the NSU Improv Troupe and performed in many productions. The couple moved to Taiwan in September 2014 and say they were inspired by a scripture that hangs on the wall above their bed. Ephesians 3:20-21 reads: "Now to Him who is able to do far more than abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work in us, to Him be the glory, in the church and in Christ Jesus, throughout all generations, forever and ever."

To view a message from the couple about the campaign, visit <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/husband-and-wife-team-ride-for-foster-care/x/11500196>

Users can also like their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/thebiggerslife>

On the Bookshelf — Again, Alabama

"Again, Alabama," a debut novel by Susan Noel Sands, was released last summer by the Tule Publishing Group. "Again, Alabama," is a southern romantic women's fiction novel. Sands is a 1989 graduate of NSU who earned a degree in elementary education. She is married to Douglas Sands, D.D.S., who graduated in 1989 from NSU's Department of Physical Education. The couple live in Alpharetta, Georgia, and have been in that area more than 20 years. They have three children ages 22, 18 and 16.

Sands is originally from Negreet and said growing up in a rural community and her love of reading sparked an interest in writing stories rich with colorful characters in small town settings. Readers can connect with Sands on her social media accounts:

<https://www.facebook.com/susannsandsauthor>

Twitter: @SusanNoelSands

Blog: Sweet Home Alpharetta at susansands.com



Browning: Loyal, devoted, honored and thankful

Originally from Baton Rouge, Staff Sgt. Robert Browning is 2001 NSU graduate with a Bachelor of Arts degree in music education. He recalls his first visit to NSU when he sat in on a Spirit of Northwestern marching band practice.

"Bill Brent stopped rehearsal just to recognize me and my father as visitors and encouraged the band to give a round of applause for a (possible) future Demon. During the break, the entire drumline came over and introduced themselves to me. It was at that moment I knew I wanted to be here," Browning said.

In 1995, while still a student, Browning joined the 156th Army National Guard Band from Bossier City. In 2001, he took a teaching job as assistant band director at Marksville High School. In 2002, he moved to Waxahachie, Texas, where he accepted one of the assistant band director positions and became the percussion coordinator for the district.

It was also in 2002 when he made the choice to switch from Army to Air Force. He joined the 531st Texas Air National Guard Band, commanded by NSU alum and current NSU Director of Bands Jeff Mathews. After teaching in Texas for a year and a half and a short tenure with the 531st, Browning took an active duty position with the USAF Band of the West at Lackland AFB in San Antonio, Texas. He was there from 2004-2008.

Browning fondly recalls how he met his wife Sarah during this time. From

2008-2014 the couple lived in Germany where Browning was a member of the USAFE (United States Air Forces in Europe) Band. During this time, he traveled to 25 different countries throughout Europe, Africa and Asia, spreading the positive message of music, breaking down small barriers with certain cultures and connecting with the people of the world. Through music and the military, he has enjoyed being able to reach and touch the lives of over 200 million people.

In 2014 Staff Sgt. Browning, his wife Sarah and daughter Brenna moved back to San Antonio and reconnected as a member of the U.S. Air Force Band of the West. Currently, Browning is the drummer with the rock/pop group "Top Flight" and they are deployed to southwest Asia and parts of Africa as the AFCENT (Air Force Central Command) Band. During this 4 month deployment, the band gets the opportunity and honor to play for the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, who give their all to the great cause of freedom.

"We are here to boost morale, to say thank you, to give a few minutes of joy to those who are working on the front lines, keeping our great nation safe. We also work with U.S. Embassies from various countries, reaching out to communities and helping break the barrier and perception that some may have on the U.S. and its military by sharing music with them. It's the most rewarding job in the world," Browning said.



"When I reached that crossroads back in 2003 to leave teaching and go active duty, every single resource I relied on for support, advice and friendship spawned from NSU. It's the biggest career move of my life and it was the right one. Northwestern State University will forever be my home. I'm loyal, devoted, honored and thankful that I can call myself an alumni of this incredible institution. It gave me the perfection foundation for my career and for many of the life-long friends I have in my life."

NSU partnering with LED to advertise job listings

Northwestern State University is partnering with Louisiana Economic Development to connect students and new graduates with Louisiana companies in the IT and digital media fields. The university will work with the LED FastStart program to let students know about job opportunities available in this growing sector. LED FastStart is Louisiana's leading workforce development program that works with higher education institutions to match graduates with in-state jobs.

"We are launching several initiatives that provide opportunities for our students and alumni to network with companies in Louisiana," said Vanner Erikson, NSU's associate director of alumni affairs and advancement. "A partnership with LED FastStart will place our graduates first in line for professional opportunities."

Northwestern State will utilize its alumni e-newsletter and

other outlets to advertise jobs for LED while LED personnel plan to participate in NSU's GradFest for graduating seniors, campus job fairs and other events. LED works with several clients in a wide range of businesses in the areas of manufacturing, corporate headquarters, digital media, customer care support centers and research and development.

To subscribe to Northwestern State's alumni e-newsletter, contact Erikson at eriksonv@nsula.edu. For more information on the LED FastStart program, visit opportunitylouisiana.com/faststart.

The link to the career center page on the NSU website is <http://www.northwesternalumni.com/s/859/index.aspx?sid=859&gid=1&pgid=7&cid=68>. This page will host the LED job positions.

Vasquez named High School Teacher of the Year



Captain Shreve High School English and social studies teacher Nicole Vasquez was named the 2016 Louisiana High School Teacher of the Year. Vasquez accepted the honor during the Ninth Annual Cecil J. Picard Educator Excellence Symposium and Celebration at the Crowne Plaza Executive Center in Baton Rouge. Vasquez graduated from Northwestern State's undergraduate English education program in 2007 and earned M.Ed. in special education-gifted in 2010.

Vasquez was among nine finalists for the annual award that celebrates and honors the state's most exceptional teachers. The award was presented by the Louisiana Department of Education in association with Dream Teachers and Louisiana Principals Association.

"I have such immense gratitude and love for my school and my district and I am honored to even stand in a room of such accomplished and amazing educators," Vasquez said. "This whole experience has been surreal, but I am thrilled that it has given our school the opportunity to showcase all of the hard-working and dedicated teachers at Captain Shreve. I don't feel like this award is about me, but rather the work of all of us to get to this point. It is our teamwork that makes Captain Shreve such a great place to teach and learn with a staff that supports and truly encourages each other."

Dr. Lamar Goree, Superintendent of Caddo Schools, applauded Vasquez whom he called an exceptional educator.

"The entire Caddo family celebrates and applauds Mrs. Vasquez for this amazing accomplishment," Goree said. "She continuously motivates and challenges her students, but also engages them in thought-provoking discussions designed to inspire and cultivate a love of learning. Mrs. Vasquez is a testament to the power of teachers and we are absolutely delighted and thrilled to see her recognized as the 2016 Louisiana High School Teacher of the Year."



Speir's flash mob goes viral

Natchitoches native Daniel Speir became part of an internet sensation when a video of him and a group of doctors, nurses and one special patient went viral.

Speir is a 2008 graduate who earned a degree in radiologic sciences and is a radiation specialist at Willis-Knighton Cancer Center. Earlier this year, he met 12-year-old Sophia who had been sent to the Cancer Center for advanced proton therapy. Sophia had been diagnosed at an early age with scoliosis but two years ago an MRI showed a tumor on her spine. She was referred to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis where surgery was performed to remove the tumor. A year later, tests revealed that tumors had returned to her spinal cord. St. Jude's physicians decided that radiation was the best option and that proton therapy was the best way to deliver that treatment. On her first day of treatment, Daniel found out that the "Whip" was Sophia's favorite dance and he promised her that he would learn the dance and on her last day of treatment, he would dance with her.

What Sophia didn't know was that when other staff members found out, they wanted to be a part of Sophia's celebration.

Daniel learned the dance from a YouTube video and the staff stayed after work to learn it to surprise Sophia with a flash mob. After going through treatment five days a week for six weeks, it was time for the promise to be fulfilled.

The group of staff, nurses and physicians -- wearing their Chuck Taylor's, just like Sophia -- had the dance filmed and edited professionally and presented the video and a framed certificate to Sophia. Sophia's mom, Julia, posted the video of the staff dancing with Sophia to YouTube where it received over 1 million hits. Within 24 hours, Inside Edition had picked up the story along with the NBC Today show and numerous other television and radio stations.

While a student at NSU Daniel was very involved on campus. He was in the President's Leadership Program, represented NSU as a Freshman Connector, served on the campus Student Activities Board, was voted onto the 2004 Homecoming Honor Court, was a member of Sigma Nu Fraternity where he served as treasurer and was a member of the Interfraternity Council.

"The patient care I learned in clinicals from NSU definitely has made an impact on my career," Speir said. "I have great memories from when I was in Natchitoches that I will remember forever. Sophia is an amazing 12-year-old girl who has left a mark on me personally because of how positive she is as a person and I thank God for putting her in my path."

Watch the video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7j52SMLYD9o>

NWLA alumni chapter growing, focused on strategic support

Northwestern State's fastest growing alumni chapter is galvanizing its membership in taking a proactive approach to recruitment, fund raising, outreach and engagement for our alma mater. The Northwest Louisiana Alumni Chapter is based in Shreveport but welcomes members from throughout the region to increase their numbers and make Northwestern State's presence felt.

The chapter hosted a spring crawfish social that drew double the number of guests from the previous year and a highly successful NSU Victory Tour stop last summer. The chapter also hosts a regular happy hour at Great Raft Brewing the first Thursday of every month. The events are relaxed and fun, but the group's leadership is serious about its role in supporting Northwestern State.

"Great things are happening right

now," said Dr. Cade Brumley. "We have asked our leadership team to commit to recruiting 10 new people over the next year to become members and also to join the Annual Fund."

By joining the Annual Fund (\$25), members become official members of the NSU Alumni Association and the NWLA chapter. There is a large focus on pushing students to Northwestern State and administrators on campus are coordinating with the chapter to introduce them to university recruiters for north Louisiana, the Shreveport nursing campus, BPCC and Barksdale Air Force Base.

"We have asked chapter members to send any prospective student recommendations to Jana Lucky, director of Recruiting, at luckyj@nsula.edu, or me (maggioc@nsula.edu)," said Dr. Chris Maggio, NSU's interim vice president

for the student experience. "We will make sure that we personally contact them and follow up with them until we get them enrolled. We have some exciting strategies scheduled for this area and our alumni engagement is important."

"Alumni are great recruiters," Brumley said. "I think our collective efforts promoting NSU as a viable college options is working."

They are also promoting NSU's Dec. 12 Christmas Gala @ the Strand by targeting schools and community events.

"We have established some social media for the chapter," Brumley said. "Follow us on Twitter at @NSUalumniNWLA to stay connected to happenings."

For more information or to join the NWLA alumni chapter, e-mail Vanner Erikson at eriksonv@nsula.edu.



Donated Descant horn will be utilized in music instruction



Craig Pratt

Northwestern State alumnus Craig Pratt of Shreveport recently donated a Hans Hoyer Descant French Horn to the NSU Foundation. The horn is valued at up to \$5,000.

"I had an opportunity to purchase another descant horn I had been looking at for years. I knew Northwestern didn't have one and knew it could benefit the students," said Pratt. "The horn has a higher range and many students don't have an opportunity to study one. I knew it would be helpful to them as they prepare to be a musician or educator."

According to Northwestern State Professor of Horn Dr. Kristine Coreil, a descant horn allows the player to play in the high range with greater ease.

"It is used to play demanding orchestra parts, such as Haydn and Mozart symphonies, as well as some more modern works that use the upper extreme of the horn's range," said Coreil. "A regular French horn has two horns in one—an F horn and a higher B-flat horn. The descant horn also has two horns in one, but uses the same B-flat horn and then a high F horn, an octave higher than the normal F horn."

Pratt, a 1972 graduate of Northwestern, has played professionally for 45 years. He has been principal horn for the Shreveport, Marshall and Longview symphonies and a member of the Texarkana Symphony Orchestra. Pratt works for a natural gas company and is minister of music at Kings Highway Christian Church in Shreveport.



PIKE chapter receives charter at summer conference

The Mu Kappa chapter of the Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity at Northwestern State University was awarded their chapter's charter Aug. 1 at the fraternity's annual summer PIKE Academy. The Mu Kappa chapter was chartered on Oct. 25, 2014. Brothers Matthew Whitaker and John Pearce received Gold certifications for attending five PIKE University events, which includes letters of recommendation from the Fraternity's Headquarter staff towards future jobs. Whitaker was also invited to a prospective staff breakfast reserved for the top 1 percent of chapter members in North America. The men of Pi Kappa Alpha look forward to achieving many awards at their convention in New Orleans next summer. From left are Jorge Cardenas, Angelo Hurtado, Matthew Whitaker, John Pearce, Beau Russell, Anthony Cannata and Jason Kuilan.

Established by Registrar staff in memory of colleague, McClung scholarship is fulfilled

Philip McClung presented a \$5,000 donation to the Northwestern State University Foundation to fulfill a scholarship established in memory of his late wife. Personnel in the NSU Registrar's Office initiated the Melinda Martin McClung Memorial Scholarship following her sudden death in 2013. The scholarship will be awarded to an incoming freshman with a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or better.

Melinda Martin McClung was a native of Winn Parish. She received her bachelor's degree at NSU and after returning to take some additional classes, she eventually went to work in the Registrar's Office where she worked 25 years and had a close relationship with her coworkers. She was killed in a traffic accident on March 24, 2013. Mrs. McClung's colleagues initiated the scholarship in recognition of their friend's dedication to her family, her coworkers and the Northwestern State students she helped.

"Melinda was first and foremost a fiercely proud wife and mother, but her love of NSU was truly high in her life's priorities," said Philip McClung, a longtime popular and respected teacher at NSU Middle Lab School. "On behalf of my sons, I would like to thank the friends and family members who contributed to this scholarship initially. Our family takes great comfort in knowing that Melinda's name will be remembered, and that her life still has meaning to this institution as it does to all of us."

Contributions to the scholarship can be made payable to the NSU Foundation and mailed to 535 University Parkway, Natchitoches, LA 71497. A notation should be made that the donation is for the Melinda Martin McClung Memorial Scholarship.



Staff in the NSU Registrar's Office worked and contributed to a scholarship established in memory of their friend and former colleague Melinda Martin McClung. From left are NSU President Dr. Jim Henderson, Jill Bankston, Registrar staff members Donna Jones and Maye Foster, Philip McClung, Registrar staff Barbara Prescott, Kayla Dunagan and Daphne Delphin; John Foster, Erin Dupree and Drake Owens.

Browns invest in PLTW students with scholarships to help earn ET degrees



Dr. Phil Brown and his wife Mary Lou Brown made a donation to the NSU Foundation to support the Project Lead the Way Articulated College Credit Scholarships for Engineering Technology Students. From left are Dr. Chris Maggio, NSU President Dr. Jim Henderson, Mary Lou Brown, Dr. Phil Brown and Robin Schott, PLTW vice president, West Central Region.

A Northwestern State University professor and his wife have established a scholarship to benefit students participating in a program in which he has devoted the last several years of his career. Dr. Phil Brown and his wife Mary Lou Brown made a donation to the NSU Foundation to support Project Lead the Way Articulated College Credit Scholarships for Engineering Technology Students.

The scholarship will facilitate the path for high school students who participate in Project Lead the Way who intend to earn degrees in engineering technology at Northwestern State.

Dr. Brown is NSU's PLTW affiliate director and an associate professor in the university's Department of Engineering

Technology. Project Lead the Way is a national non-profit that introduces K-12 students to concepts in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The program is designed to encourage youngsters to pursue careers in the STEM areas and attract high tech industry to Louisiana. Last year, NSU began awarding college credit in engineering technology to high school students who complete Project Lead the Way classes.

"Beyond the award of up to eight semester hours of college credit for an eligible student when he or she begins classes their freshman year in our department, the PLTW articulated college credit scholarship program for ET students provides an additional incentive reward for persisting to the completion of his or her engineering technology degree program," Brown said.

Brown became aware of PLTW in 2006 and spearheaded the initiative for Northwestern State to become PLTW's Louisiana affiliate university. He has since coordinated the support, outreach and professional development NSU offers to PLTW programs in Louisiana, which has grown to include 96 programs in elementary, middle and high schools throughout the state that focus on engineering, biomedical science and computer science. The elective courses are hands-on and exciting for students, but also rigorous.

Dr. and Mrs. Brown initiated the scholarship with a donation of \$10,000 and hope their gift encourages other to donate to the continued growth of the scholarship fund.

For more information on Project Lead the Way at Northwestern State, visit engrtech.nsula.edu/project-lead-the-way.

Theatre alumni establish scholarship to benefit aspiring stars

Majoring in theatre and dance isn't for the faint of heart and a group of Northwestern State University Theatre and Dance alumni have decided to do their part to help current students in the program.

The alumni have created a "Theatre Utility Scholarship," which will be awarded to a student this fall. Alumnae Joanie DiPrizio and Jenny Schroeder Weber spearheaded the fund-raising campaign to start the scholarship. An initial donation was made to the NSU Foundation at an alumni reunion.

"When looking back over our years at NSU, we remember fondly our days and nights there and the valuable lessons we learned over the years," said Weber, a 1996 graduate of NSU who lives in Peoria, Illinois. "We also remember what it was like to be in college and struggling to make ends meet. You have regular classes, plus specialty classes designed for our craft, and production requirements which took not only the books and necessities of a traditional degree, but countless hours and funds in attaining the correct makeup kits, head shots and resumes, video and now internet reels, dance shoes and attire and tools needed for tech and practicum hours."

Weber said she and her fellow students valued the education they received from faculty including Jack Wann, Ed Brazo, Terry Byars, Vicki Parrish, Vernon Carroll, Jan Johnston, Chris and Sharon Foster, Bill Brent, Michael Rorex, Sue Cherry, Scott Burrell and others. They decided one way to honor these faculty would be to "give something back."

Students receiving the scholarship must be at least a sophomore with a 3.0 average with demonstrated financial need. Funds must be used and documented on theatre supplies including head shots, resumes, makeup kits, dance



Alumni from Northwestern State University's Theatre and Dance program have established a Theatre Utility Scholarship to assist current students get supplies needed to help them in their career. Several alumni recently attended a reunion where they met with current students and attended a workshop. Attending the ceremony establishing the scholarship were, front row from left Professor of Theatre Dr. Vicki Parish, Jenny Weber, Shea Eaves, Joanie DiPrizio, Brandi Corkern, Chelsey Goldsmith, Savannah Callais, Marissa McMickens, Kathleen Kerner, Tiffany Chasteen and Van Erickson. On the back row from left are Abby Pudlewski, Brandon Mitchell, Austin Pecot, Hector Pena, Jay Canova, Sean Grady, Lee Townsend, Annie Dausat, Northwestern State President Dr. James Henderson and former Artistic Director Dr. Jack Wann.

attire and shoes, tech tools and acquisition of theatrical books or plays.

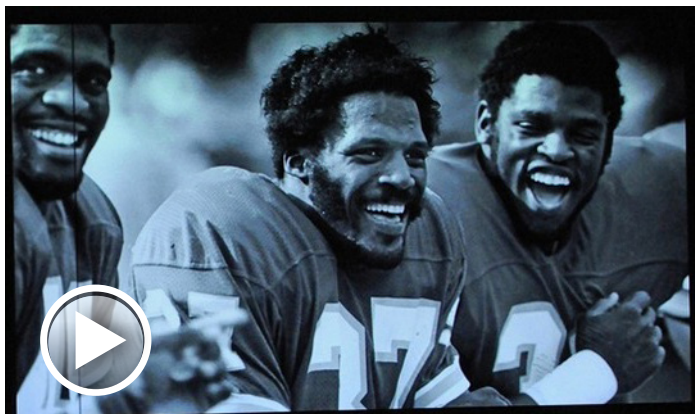
For more information on the Theatre Utility Scholarship, contact the NSU Foundation at (318) 357-4414 or go to northwesternalumni.com and click on NSU Foundation.

Key Scholarship established as birthday surprise for CAPA supporter



Jim Bob Key, a long-time supporter of Northwestern State University's School of Creative and Performing Arts, was honored with a scholarship named for him and his late wife that will benefit a music student at Northwestern State. The Jim Bob and Betty Sue Key Endowed Scholarship in Music was initiated with a gift of \$1,000 from an anonymous donor. The final goal for the scholarship is \$10,000. The scholarship will be awarded to a junior or senior level student for one year of study in music or music education. The student must maintain a 2.5 grade point average. The scholarship was a birthday surprise announced during a gathering at Key's home on July 1 with friends from the community, the university and the Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony Society. Key celebrated his birthday July 5. For more information or to contribute to the scholarship, contact Jill Bankston at (318) 357-4414 or e-mail bankstonj@nsula.edu.

Screening for Delaney film evokes strong emotions



At 7:17 p.m. Aug. 4, the lights dimmed at Magale Recital Hall on the Northwestern State campus, beginning a roller-coaster ride of emotions.

Although the ESPN 30 for 30 short film “Delaney” – which was shown in an advanced screening – lasted approximately 20 minutes, it segued into what seemed like a lifetime of emotions from a panel of Delaney’s Northwestern State contemporaries.

“When the film first started and I heard Joe Delaney talk, there were tears in my eyes,” said Mark Duper, who was a teammate of Delaney’s on the gridiron and on the 1981 NCAA champion 4x100-meter relay team.

“My wife said, ‘Do you want me to get you a tissue?’ I said, ‘No, I’m going to be OK. Just to hear his voice, it felt like he was still here.’”

Echoing the 30 for 30 series’ tagline of “What if I told you ...,” Northwestern State director of marketing Josh McDaniel posted a teaser for the event with the caption: “What if I told you that one man’s death was a perfect reflection of his life?”

In the 32 years since Delaney drowned trying to save three children in a pond near Monroe’s Chennault Park, his story has been told and retold. In those three decades, three words have come to embody Delaney’s story.

“Love, sacrifice and heroism,” said Northwestern State President Dr. Jim Henderson. “That’s Joe Delaney.”

Delaney was universally loved throughout his NSU career and his all-too-brief two-year stint with the Kansas City Chiefs.

That love was evident on Aug. 5, as a crowd of approximately 350 that ranged from elementary school-age children to octogenarians celebrated director Grant Curtis’ entry into the 30 for 30 series of documentaries.

Watching Delaney play gave Curtis one of his first tastes of a sporting hero. Making the movie gave him a glimpse into the man who was feted during a bittersweet evening.

“This movie doesn’t exist without a great man who many of you in the audience were able to meet that I never did,” Curtis said. “I’m not able to tell this story without the selfless sacrifice he made. When I made this story, what I really tried to do was to get out of the way of Joe’s story and let Joe tell it himself through the eyes of the people who loved him, knew him and played with him and against him.”

The film, which premiered on Grantland.com and ESPN.com at on Aug. 19, is split nearly evenly between Delaney’s days in Haughton and at Northwestern State and the events of June 29, 1983, when Delaney – who could not swim – raced into a man-made pond to try to rescue three children.

Thirty-two years after that day, Delaney’s act resonates just as

much with his former teammates as with anyone.

“One thing I want to say to everyone here, ‘How many of us would have taken off running, knowing you can’t swim, and go and try to save three kids?’” said Delaney’s lead blocker, Brett Knecht. “Think about that when you leave tonight.”

The expected emotions that came with the film’s climax were palpable. As the lights rose, there were audible sniffles from the audience.

The night, however, was equal parts bitter and sweet – bitter for a life that ended heroically but before its time and sweet for what Delaney brought to the world in his 24 years and the legacy that he left behind.

David Causey was one of the panelists, joined by Duper, Knecht, Van Kyzar, David Wright, Petey Perot and Sonny Louis. Another former Delaney teammate, Jack Brittain, served as moderator and panelist.

Causey and Louis were teammates with Delaney at Haughton, and Causey recalled a pact the three made to attend the same college – if possible. Once Delaney became a household name among major college football programs, it seemed the trio would become a duo at the next level.

In its 20-minute duration, Curtis’ film ran the emotional gamut from one-liners from Delaney’s widow, Carolyn, and former Chiefs teammate Deron Cherry to the audible sadness in clips of Dan Rather reporting on Delaney’s death on the CBS Evening News.

It brought back to life an athlete who many in the audience – which included the current NSU football team and coaching staff – had only heard or read about. It also transported back in time 15-20 of Delaney’s teammates from his college days.

“To see all the stuff on the film, it takes you back to your childhood memories,” Causey said. “That was one of Joe’s dreams, to be able to play professionally. **For every coach he had, that was one of the big questions – ‘Coach, do you think I’m good enough?’**

“That was always the thing. We all knew Joe was good enough. It was just a matter of him believing in himself.”

Though careers and life separated Delaney’s teammates after their time in Natchitoches, the screening helped them to reconnect with their friend.

“Just watching the movie and seeing him on the sideline with the Kansas City Chiefs and guys getting around him, it looked like O-linemen and, maybe a tight end, that one part brought back to me Joe Delaney,” said Petey Perot, an NSU offensive lineman who, like Delaney, was a second-round draft pick. **“Just the way he was, you wanted him to be on your team. If he was on your team, he made you as a person better.”**

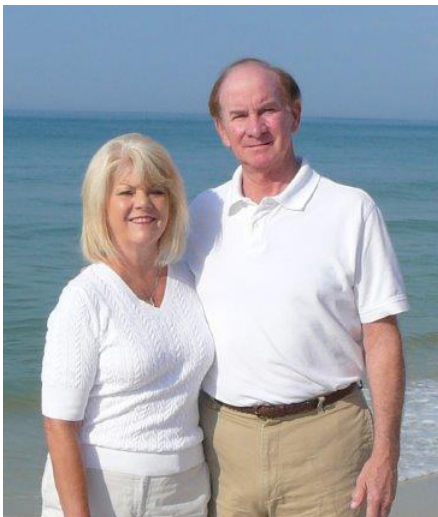
In the reaction to hearing about Delaney’s death, his Kansas City teammate, Ken Kremer, said Delaney was “Kansas City’s Joe.”

There are at least three cities or towns that can make that argument – Haughton, Natchitoches and Kansas City.

And after the road to the screening, there may be another person that can make that claim as well.

“You see it in these guys when they talk about Joe just how much reverence they have for him,” Curtis said. “He’s Haughton’s Joe. He’s Louisiana’s Joe. He’s Natchitoches’ Joe.”

The Delaney video can be viewed at <http://grantland.com/features/30-for-30-shorts-delaney/>.



Pat and Donald Horton

Paying tribute to the driving force behind the creation of Northwestern State's innovative tailgating area near Turpin Stadium featuring cable television connections and other

Demon Alley tailgate row named for Donald Horton

amenities, the Demons have renamed it "Donald's Demon Alley" to honor the late Donald Horton of Coushatta, announced NSU Director of Athletics Greg Burke.

Horton served as NSU Athletic Association President for more than 12 years before his passing in June 2013. He drew the plans for the tailgating zone south of Turpin Stadium, NSU's football stadium, with cable TV, water and electrical connections provided to patrons, changing the face of game day activity at Northwestern when it was opened for the 2003 season.

Commonly known as the "Demon Alley" since then, the area now features the Collins Family Pavilion and is the cornerstone for avid tailgating prior to NSU home football games.

Along with being focal figures in tailgating at NSU for decades, he and his wife Pat were involved with countless Demons athletic events and fundraisers for many years. They hosted the annual Red River Parish "Victory Tour" stops at their Coushatta home from 2003-12. They hosted hospitality stations at the annual Don't Die Wondering Golf Classic supporting Lady Demon basketball each August.

Horton, a Tulane Law School graduate, was a member of the Athletic Association Board of Directors for almost 30 years, serving as president for most of Burke's two decades years as director of athletics. He and Pat were vital to the development of the bi-annual Scholarship Auction that raises funds supporting NSU student-athletes.

#CoolPrez puts scare in star point guard before falling in H-O-R-S-E game



Northwestern State basketball point guard Jalan West felt a little pressure competing against University president Dr. Jim Henderson last August, and that was even before their much-anticipated game of H-O-R-S-E started.

After falling behind two letters to one, West was even more jumpy, but it was Henderson feeling the butterflies

at the end.

West took a jumper over the head of Tonia, Henderson's wife of 22 years, and drained a 20-footer that eventually sealed the H-O-R-S-E game in Henderson's own backyard, nicknamed "The Brickyard."

Henderson, 46, admitted he couldn't concentrate with his beautiful wife in close proximity, after he short-armed his final shot to lose.

"It was a dirty trick," Henderson said in a post-game discussion with Jalan. "Tonia distracts me to this day. She's right in front of me, and all I could think about was the butterflies in my stomach. There's no way I could make that shot with that beautiful creature from Gueydan standing in front of me."

West admitted he improvised the last shot, especially after missing several long-range attempts while seated from the patio chair.

"I just saw a pretty face in the crowd and figured it would go in my favor," West said. "It was a distraction for him, and it worked."

The much-hyped challenge began on social media. West, the NCAA's 16th-leading scorer averaging 20 points per game this past season, is used to getting his buckets down the road in historic Prather Coliseum. But one July 2 tweet after driving past Henderson's house eventually brought him to Henderson's backyard, complete with a portable Spalding basketball goal, a large oak tree with a dangling yellow rope and a pitched tent to replace the airplane hangar-shaped coliseum.



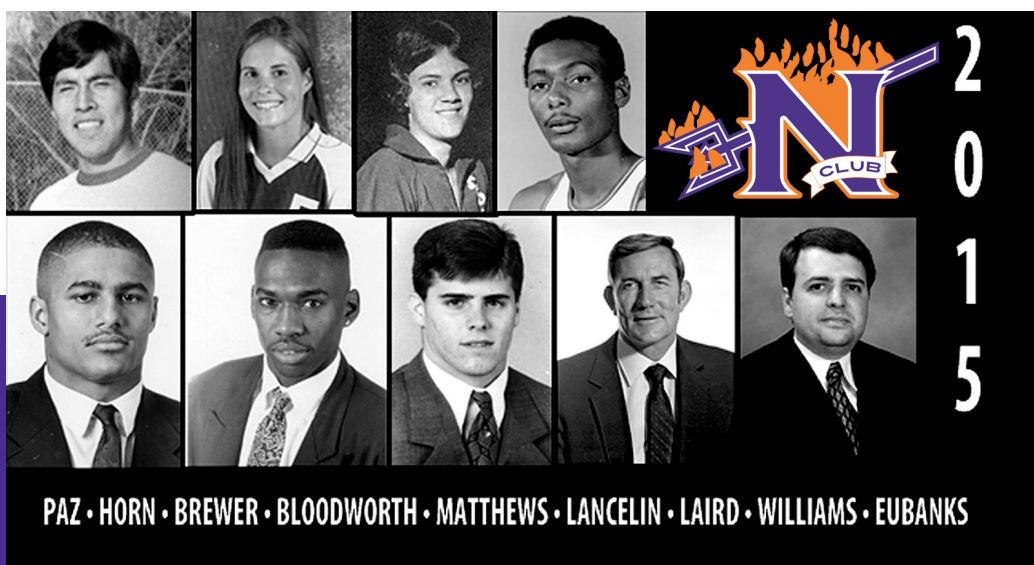
The Mississippi Community College Sports Hall of Fame inducted J.W. Beck (1958) into its 2015 class. Beck played football and baseball at Southwest Community College and Northwestern State. He resides in Brandon, Mississippi with his wife Sondra.

continued on page 17

Looking Back



Northwestern's \$2 million Teacher Education Center was completed in 1970 and gave the university a fourth dimension in education. In addition to lectures, observation-participation programs and student teaching, the center introduced a program of experimental learning laboratories for research and development of innovations in teaching and learning. The units encompassed nursery-age children through the secondary level and served not only for research and development but as an integrated part of the preparation of prospective teachers.



All-time greats in football, basketball, soccer, track and field and tennis will be inducted in Northwestern State's N Club Hall of Fame Oct. 17 as part of the university's annual homecoming celebration. Basketball stars Charles Bloodworth and Lisa Brewer, football record-setters Brad Laird and All-American Clarence Matthews, two-time All-American triple jumper Eric Lancelin, soccer's Holly Horn and tennis star and coach Willie Paz will be enshrined in 10 a.m. Saturday morning ceremonies at Magale Recital Hall. The event is open free of charge to the public. Also honored with the N Club's Distinguished Service Award will be former head football coach A.L. Williams. Assistant athletics director and NCAA compliance director Dustin Eubanks will be presented honorary N Club membership. Induction in the N Club Hall of Fame is the highest honor NSU awards to its former student-athletes, coaches and athletic staff.

Guess Who



Prior to the last State Fair Classic held in the fall of 1989, State Fair Court members and an SAB representative purchased tickets for a cash drawing giveaway as they watched yell leaders cheer at the pep rally. Can you name the students and the Director of Student activities selling the tickets? If you know the answer, call the NSU Publications Office at (318) 357-4553 or e-mail jacksonl@nsula.edu.

Summer Edition Guess Who: Jenny Claire Huntley as Countess Bordonni and David Navarre as count Kasnar confronted the Hollanders, played by Charles Balliro and Louella Bains in a scene from Northwestern State's 1970 production of Woody Allen's "Don't Drink the Water."

Those who guessed correctly were

Terrie Coombs
Patricia Green Evans (1970), Haughton
Charly Balliro (1970), Winthrop, Massachusetts
Donna Thomasee (1984), Natchitoches
JoAnn Dombrowski (1970), Bonita Springs, Florida

Peggy Balliro Bayard (1968) New Iberia
Ron Spiller (1970), Edinboro, Pennsylvania

SAVE The DATE



Dr. Burt Allen, retiring director of choral activities, will be honored with a retirement extravaganza.

Details will be available as plans are finalized.

NSU CHOIR ALUMNI REUNION

Jan. 15-17, 2016

<https://capa.nsula.edu/>



In Memory

1939 – Lois Turner Fritz, June 7, 2015, West Helena, Arkansas
1948 – Rev. Ralph Thomas Self, July 8, 2015, Alexandria
1949 – James McConathy, July 14, 2015, Rayville
1953 – Jessie Wilkinson Beard, July 13, 2015, Columbia City, Indiana
1954 – Wanda Williams Gamble, June 15, 2015, Natchitoches
1959 – Mary Duncelman Rabb, July 28, 2015, Cut Off
1964 – Mary Lou Anthony Welch, Aug. 5, 2015, Jena
1962 – Doug W. Brewer, May 7, 2015, Irving, Texas
1972 – Daniel C. Butler, March 19, 2014, Natchitoches
1972 – Lambert Peterson, May 25, 2015, Many
1981 – Melvin Neimeyer, July 20, 2015, Alexandria
1987, 1992 – Patsy Varnell Clark, June 18, 2015, Winnfield
1992, 1995 – Michael Rowley, June 6, 2015, Austin, Texas
1993 – John D. Howell, June 18, 2015, Natchitoches
2007 – Thomas LaValley, Aug. 5, 2015, Shreveport
2015 – Ashlee Edmiston, Aug. 7, 2015, Uncertain, Texas

H-O-R-S-E game continued from page 15

"Never noticed @DrJBHenderson had a goal in the backyard, wonder if I could get a game of horse sometime soon..." West tweeted from his @jalanwest12 account. Henderson quipped on July 3 that NSU alumni needed to donate \$100 for every letter he scores and \$1,000 for every letter West scores.

But the wily academic, whose late father Clem was a state championship-winning prep basketball coach at Fair Park High, had the CollegeInsider.com Mid-Major All-American on his heels early. Lying in a reclined patio chair at least 15 feet away from the hoop, Henderson banked in his first shot, to the cheers of the 50 fans in attendance.

"It was great for me to get the first shot to go down, to get

that first letter on him," Henderson said. "To get two letters to me was like climbing Mount Everest."

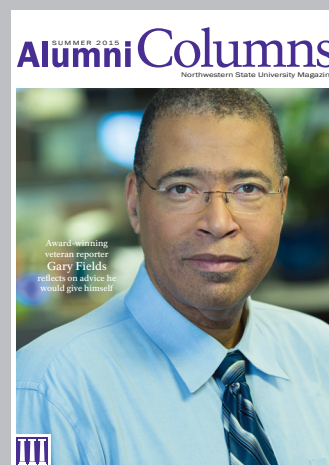
A rematch is anticipated in Prather Coliseum in October. Henderson said he didn't want to damage the psyche of his star heading into the season. Whatever the result of the next H-O-R-S-E game, the connection between "#CoolPrez" (West's Twitter moniker for Henderson) wise to the ways of social media and a silky-smooth star point guard hopefully destined to play under the bright NBA lights was evident. "We're so fortunate to have Jalan on campus in Natchitoches – he is what a scholar-athlete is supposed to be," Henderson said. "He engages the community and is a leader on campus, and he plays basketball like nobody's business."

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